

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 31 is sought to be added. Claims 1-17 are sought to be cancelled. Claim 18 is sought to be amended. Upon entering this amendment, Claims 18-26 and 28-31 are pending in the application, with 18 and 31 being the independent claims.

No new matter has been entered by any amendments shown above.

Based on the above amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 18, 19, 21-26 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO Patent No. WO 98/28644 to Schultz (“Schultz”) (using U.S. Patent No. 6,366,410 as a translated document) in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2003/0053218 to Fujimoto (“Fujimoto”). Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schultz in view of Fujimoto, further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0036832 to Schultz (“Schultz PPA”). Applicant respectively traverses these rejections.

Claim 18 recites at least a third lens group comprising a single lens element made from a single material having a single index of refraction that receives the beam of radiation from the second lens group and controls field characteristics of the beam of radiation at a patterning device plane.

The Examiner admits that Schultz lacks specific reference to the third lens group containing only one lens element, and relies on Fujimoto to allegedly teach the use of a third lens group containing a single lens element. However, Fujimoto clearly teaches in the abstract and paragraphs 0032, 0047, and 0091, as well as in Figures 1-4, that a third lens unit has two cemented lens elements, not a single lens element, and that each of the two lens elements is made from a different material having a different index of refraction, and other different optical characteristics. This is because Fujimoto desires to

bend light leaving the first lens unit and entering the second lens unit in order to, for example, correct for aberrations. Fujimoto does not teach or suggest having a single lens element made from a single material having a single index of refraction in the third lens unit, nor could it be motivated to include such a feature as this would destroy its teaching.

Therefore, Fujimoto cannot be combined with Schultz to teach at least a third lens group consisting of a single lens element made from a single material having a single index of refraction, as is recited in claim 18. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 18.

Dependent claims 19-26 and 28-30 are allowable over the applied references for at least the same reason that independent claim 18 is allowable. The Shultz PPA adds nothing to cure the deficiencies of Shultz and Fujimoto with respect to the present invention.

New Claim 31

New claim 31 recites at least a system comprising a third lens group comprising a single lens made from one material having one index of refraction, and also recites the single lens has a spherical receiving surface and an aspherical transmitting surface. None of the applied references teach these features, as discussed above in connection with claim 18. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner find the claim allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will

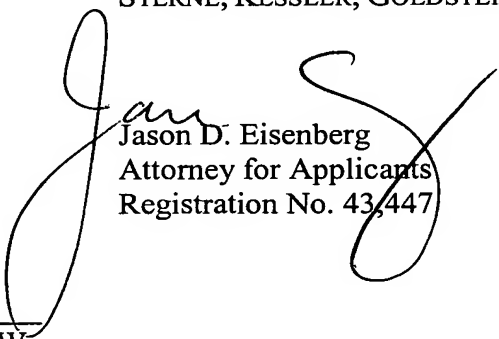
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expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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